

## CLAIMS

5           The invention claimed is:

1.       A device for acquiring and transporting an object, comprising:
  - a.       a housing having a low clearance portion;
  - b.       a first conveyance assembly movably connected to the housing for  
10           moving the housing with respect to an environmental surface;
  - c.       a second conveyance assembly movably connected to the housing  
          for moving the object with respect to the housing; and
  - d.       a power assembly for moving the conveyance assemblies.
- 15       2.       The device of claim 1, wherein the object is an injured human  
          being.
3.       The device of claim 1, wherein the device is configured as a  
          stretcher.
- 20       4.       The device of claim 1, wherein the device is configured as a  
          guerney.

5. The device of claim 1, wherein the housing is a frame for supporting the first and second conveyance mechanisms and the power assembly.

6. The device of claim 5, wherein the frame comprises a pair of chassis sides and a plurality of spacers connecting the chassis sides.

7. The device of claim 6, wherein the frame further comprises a belt glide bed connected to the chassis sides.

8. The device of claim 5, wherein the housing further comprises a handle for lifting the device.

9. The device of claim 1, wherein the first conveyance assembly comprises a lower drive roller connected to the housing and to the power assembly, a lower end idler roller connected to the housing, and a lower endless belt movably coupled to the lower drive roller and the lower end idler roller.

10. The device of claim 9, wherein the first conveyance assembly further comprises at least one support idler roller connected to the housing, disposed between the lower drive roller and the lower end idler roller and engaging the lower endless belt.

11. The device of claim 1 wherein the second conveyance assembly comprises an upper drive roller connected to the housing and to the power assembly, an upper end idler roller connected to the housing, and an upper endless belt movably coupled to the upper drive roller and the upper end idler roller.

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12. The device of claim 11, wherein the second conveyance assembly further comprises at least one tensioning idler roller connected to the housing, disposed between the upper drive roller and the upper end idler roller and engaging the upper endless belt.

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13. The device of claim 10, wherein the power assembly comprises a motor communicatively connected to the upper drive roller and to the lower drive roller.

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14. The device of claim 13, further comprising a transmission assembly communicatively connected to the motor, the upper drive roller and the lower drive roller.

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15. The device of claim 14 wherein the transmission assembly is selected from the group of transmission types consisting of planetary gears, belts, sprocket/chain sets, and combinations thereof.

16. The device of claim 1, further comprising a control system  
communicatively connected to the power assembly.

5 17. A low profile, powered stretcher for acquiring and transporting an  
injured human being, comprising:

- a. a housing having a low clearance portion, the housing including a  
pair of chassis sides and a plurality of spacers connecting the  
chassis sides;
- 10 b. a first conveyance assembly movably connected to the housing for  
moving the housing with respect to an environmental surface, the  
first conveyance assembly including a lower drive roller connected  
to the housing and to the power assembly, a lower end idler roller  
connected to the housing, and a lower endless belt movably  
coupled to the lower drive roller and the lower end idler roller, the  
15 lower endless belt moving in a first rotational direction;
- c. a second conveyance assembly movably connected to the housing  
for moving the object with respect to the housing, the second  
conveyance assembly including an upper drive roller connected to  
the housing and to the power assembly, an upper end idler roller  
20 connected to the housing, and an upper endless belt movably  
coupled to the upper drive roller and the upper end idler roller, the  
upper endless belt moving in a second rotational direction which is  
opposite the first rotational direction; and

d. a power assembly for moving the conveyance assemblies, the power assembly including a battery, at least one motor communicatively connected to the battery, to lower drive roller and to the upper drive roller, and a control system communicatively connected to the motor and to the battery.

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18. A method of acquiring and transporting an object, comprising the steps of:

- a. moving a housing having a low clearance portion so that the low clearance portion moves toward and under the object; and
- b. moving the object relative to the housing.

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19. The method of claim 3, wherein the object is an injured human being.

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20. A method of acquiring and transporting an injured human being, comprising the steps of:

- a. moving a housing having a low clearance portion so that the low clearance portion moves toward and under the object, the housing being moved by powering a lower endless belt to move in a first rotational direction; and

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- b. simultaneously moving the object relative to the housing by powering an upper endless belt to move in a second rotational direction which is opposite the first rotational direction.